ABSTRACT

A method for inhibiting bacterial growth in whole blood and/or blood components, which may therefore also be used to extend the storage time for the whole blood and/or blood components, through treatment with carbon monoxide. This method is preferably used for the preservation of platelets, which are both particularly vulnerable to bacterial and other microbial infection, and which are also particularly suitable for use with the method of the present invention. Carbon monoxide may be present in an amount of from about 40% to about 100%. Platelets may be stored in a solution buffered by any suitable buffer, such as sodium bicarbonate. Platelet viability may be determined by measuring the ability to aggregate, for example in response to an agonist such as collagen.